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TOURISMOS: AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF TOURISM
Volume X, Number X, Spring 200X, pp. XX-XX

"Volunteer Tourism: Working on Holiday or Playing at Work?"

Konstantinos Tomazos
University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK
Richard Butler
University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

The paper reviews the rapid growth of volunteer tourism, and discusses the changes that have taken place in the ethos and focus of this distinct market, the locations used as destinations and the organisations they represent. It is apparent that over the last two decades the organisations offering volunteer tourist vacations have increasingly focused their attention on conventional commercial tourism markets and their methods and practices perhaps reflect profit driven strategies. The paper concludes that the balance has clearly shifted away from the virtues of early volunteering towards hedonism and profit and that raises question about the long term value and credentials of volunteer tourism. Whether that pattern continues, remains to be seen.

Keywords: Volunteer Tourism, volunteering, supply analysis, profit

INTRODUCTION

Defining Volunteer Tourism

A volunteer tourist has been defined as a tourist who "….for various reasons volunteer in an organised way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2001: p1).

A key part of the definition of a volunteer tourist is the absence of pay. Volunteer tourists do not get remunerated while on their trip, instead, they pay for the privilege of volunteering. This payment could be either in the form of a relatively small one-off registration fee or a larger fee covering expenses and contributing to the project or organisation involved (Wearing, 2001; Ellis, 2003). In terms of this payment, volunteers often pay relatively more than what they would have had paid for a 'normal' holiday to the same destination (Wearing, 2001) with the extra cost ideally being for the benefit of the cause or project the volunteer will work for.

This paper explores how the growth of interest in volunteer tourism and the large scale expansion of opportunities over the past few years, have significantly altered the nature of the activity.

Environmental Setting for Volunteer Tourism

Conventional tourism has grown rapidly and extensively since its commercial origins in the mid 1920s. Criticism and reaction to mass tourism, especially in the second half of the 20th century has resulted in the emergence of what have been termed "new" forms of tourism (Poon 1993), some reflecting specialised interests, others reflecting a desire for an alternative approach, such as sustainable tourism. The turn towards 'green', less harmful products has had a great impact in the field of tourism with the development and increasing popularity of alternative tourism and ecotourism (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987; Butler, 1990; O'Neil, 1991; Wheeler, 1992; Kamaro, 1996; Honey, 1999). This is manifested in tourists' taste as a desire for the new, the authentic, the sensitive and inevitably the more exclusive. The doctrine of low volume-high value that underlines alternative forms of tourism has often promoted exclusivity at

high prices. Potential tourists have been 'coerced' into making the 'right' choice in tune with the times and usually this means a more expensive choice. It might appear to a cynic that tour operators have been presented with a new and exciting field to exploit and from which to make even larger profits by providing new supposedly authentic experiences within low scale development areas (Wight, 1993; Wheeller, 1992). As a result, on the one hand alternative tourism and ecotourism provide the customer with a feeling of having the moral 'high ground' while being sensitive, exclusive and 'fashionable' and on the other hand give the operators a 'licence' to print money. Thus it could be argued that by exploiting the guilty conscience of an industry and a market with many past sins, ecotourism and alternative tourism provide superficial validation; while the DNA of short term, money making, profit driven practices remains (Wheeller 1993).

The debate about such forms of tourism and their merits, motives and beneficiaries has been going on for two decades and signs are it will continue for a considerable time. This paper contributes to an analogous debate, this time focusing on volunteer tourism, and by examining its pattern of development, suggests it is becoming the 'new ecotourism'.

Organized Volunteering

Volunteering is a much older activity than volunteer tourism and covers a much wider field of endeavour without the holiday aspect that is characteristic of the latter. Lynn and David-Smith 1992: 16) define volunteering as "….any activity which involves spending time unpaid doing something which aims to benefit someone (individual or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives, or to benefit the environment"

It has been suggested that volunteerism and community spirit took its present form in the 'New World' during the struggles of the first North American settlers (Johnson, 1997). It was not religion that was the origin here, as has been suggested elsewhere (Stebbins and Graham 2004) but rather the native people who displayed solidarity and support in abundance by voluntarily assisting the Europeans in many ways. Subsequently, farming neighbours frequently combined efforts to accomplish vital work. Not taking part in these schemes meant isolation and being an outcast in these days in such an unforgiving environment could mean certain death. Gradually these supportive relationships helped to instil amongst the settlers a sense of what is now called community identity (Johnson, 1997). A living illustration of those communities are the contemporary "Amish" communities in the United States and Canada, who reject modern technology and live apart from modern society in conditions which could be easily described as a throwback to the 18th century (Kraybill, 1997). As the numbers of settlers grew, the commitment to voluntary cooperation to achieve common goals continued and volunteer organisations began to form, some of which have survived today in institutional forms, like hospitals and universities (Johnson, 1997).

It could be hypothesised that perhaps the Europeans had needed a shock that would become a catalyst for voluntary and charitable initiatives and it came in the form of another kind of storm that awoke feelings of solidarity and mutual assistance. The First World War revealed a new form of misery and total destruction to the shocked nations of Europe and this had a considerable impact on the psyche of ordinary people and paved the way for the birth of the phenomenon of volunteer tourism. Early in the 20th century the International Fellowship of Reconciliation

was an organisation of Christian pacifists who shared the values of non-violence, peace education and inter-religious dialogue. In 1919 they organised an international conference in the Netherlands, at which a Swiss man, Pierre Ceresole, presented the idea of an international team of volunteers who would work together to repair the damage from the war which had just finished.

His idea was based on the premise that working together in a spirit of friendship would be an expression of solidarity which could heal the wounds of hate (Ceresole, 1954 in SCI.org). The sympathetic values determined by society, such as pacifism and "help the wounded" became the instigation behind the phenomenon of volunteer tourism. Ceresole envisaged an outlet for human effort and ingenuity designed to alleviate pain rather than causing it and quickly put his vision into action. As a result during the summer of 1920 a small group of volunteers lead by Ceresole himself, began rebuilding a village near Verdun. Similar motives of compassion drove Dunant to found the Red Cross in the same period (Boissier, 1985). Both the Red Cross movement and Ceresole's first work camps reflected a new drive towards peace initiatives. With its highlight being the Geneva Convention (1864-1949), the pacifist movement brought together many committed men and women who became increasingly disillusioned with the status quo, especially amid the frenzy of rearmament of the mid-thirties. This swelled the numbers of volunteers participating on Service Civil International (SCI) work camps designed to assist in areas in need (SCI, 2007).

The end of the Great Wars signalled the end of an era for volunteerism. It marked the end of the period of 'tangible' and 'direct' suffering which swelled the numbers of western volunteers. It would take another form of war to help in the evolution of international volunteer tourism. The "Cold

War" resulted in ongoing competition for political support between the communist countries and those of the west (see Dockrill, M.L & Hopkins, M.F, 2006) and both parties engaged in a variety of actions to further their causes (Gaddis, 2006).

In the early 1960s US authorities were receiving worrying reports about Soviet university students travelling to developing countries and providing expert assistance. The fear of more countries falling under Soviet influence drove the Americans into action and the US Peace Corps was formed in 1961 in order to win hearts and minds around the world. Within two years 7,300 volunteers were in the field serving in 44 countries from Afghanistan to Uruguay and by June 1966, more than 15,000 volunteers were working in the field, the largest number in the Peace Corps' history. Irrespective of the political agenda that lead to it, the founding of Peace Corps provided contemporary volunteer tourism with a blueprint of international expansion and involvement at a large scale. Despite the Cold War, Volunteer Tourism found extra impetus in the economic boom between 1945 and 1973 which led to a rise in spare time and increased motivation to travel. The economic boom, the rise of social security and the reduction in working hours gave people the opportunity to seek self fulfilment and success in their spare time as well as at work (Rivlin, 1992). This change in attitude and goal setting meant that perspective volunteers were not prepared to settle for working in a camp to achieve a specific goal. Instead they began showing an inclination towards striving to expand their horizons and raise their levels of conscience. This change in volunteers' expectations meant that volunteer tourism had to transform in order to meet the new needs.

The Volunteer Tourism Market

The desk study summarised in this paper does not claim to be representative of all organizations providing volunteer tourism experiences, however, it does aim to be comprehensive in terms of the proliferation of projects offered, the destinations promoted, the appeal to different types of volunteers, and the continuous segmentation and diversification which characterizes the market. The general aims are to explore the nature of the growth of volunteer tourism, the relationship between purpose of projects, their location and potential need, and the nature (origins, focus and status) of organisations offering volunteer tourism opportunities.

Methodology

Callannan and Thomas (2003) utilised the Volunteer Abroad database in their initial study on volunteer tourism, and the same source was used in this study, but for two different dates (2005 and 2007). Other data bases exist but Volunteer Abroad appears to be the most detailed and encompassing source of these organisations. The newly created data base contained the organization's name and contact details, the year of establishment and the founder as the basic information on each unit. In addition, details on each project were included, namely, name, nature, duration and location. Where it existed additional information on methods of operation was added including how volunteers were screened, if and how the organisation contributed to projects, and any additional services offered.

Volunteer Tourism Destinations and Assumptions

The assumption that the number of projects offered to potential volunteers had increased greatly was supported as the data showed that the number of projects located in the ten countries which featured the most in the data base had increased from the 51 recorded for 2003 by Callanan and Thomas (2003) to 185 in 2005 and to 241 in 2007.It was decided to explore if the locations utilised reflected "need" for assistance as measured by the Human Development Score used by the United Nations. This was found not to be the case, with only 147 projects in the countries with the greatest need as so defined, while over 900 were located in countries with the least "need". When this aspect was examined in more detail to see if total aggregate need, involving population numbers revealed such a relationship, this was also found to be non-existent. Projects in India and China for example, were matched by similar numbers of projects in Costa Rica, Nepal and Ecuador. Clearly simple need on an average per capita basis or total need related to population was not related to location of projects.

Volunteer Tourism Products

An examination of the Volunteer Abroad database revealed that some 995 projects did not meet the definition used in this study in that they either lasted longer than a year or included paid employment or internships. This left a total of 2,446 projects that met the criteria used in this research. These were then subdivided into nine categories, relating to the overall nature of the specific projects. They are summarised in Table 1 which shows the numbers of cases identified within each of these groups. Community welfare projects were the most numerous (805), followed by those relating to Teaching (572) and Environmental issues (502). The remainder were much less popular, with 236 in the Medical category, 131

in Cultural projects, and fewer than 100 in each of the other categories (Business Development 91, Building (54), Research (47) and Other (280).

Table 7: Project Groups and their Activities

Group	Activities	Total of Cases
Community Welfare	Community Development Children Care Elderly Disability Peace Human Right/ Legal	805
Teaching	Teaching a Foreign Language Sports Coaching	572
Environmental	Nature Conservation Wildlife Protection Global Warming	502
Medical	Hospital Support Pandemic (HIV, Ebola) Support Drug Rehabilitation	236
Cultural	Arts Cultural Exchange Empowerment of Women Heritage Conservation Museum Support	131
Business Development	IT Support Accounting Support Farming/ Organic	91
Building	Construction Renovation Water Management	54
Research	Wildlife Monitoring Land-mapping/Zoning	47
Other/ Miscellaneous	Catastrophe Relief Olympic Games	28

(Based on Callannan and Thomas, 2003)

Many projects were designed to support and improve the lives of local communities directly, and include working in orphanages, elderly homes

or clinics for the disabled. Clearly the range and proliferation of community welfare related projects changes continuously but most organisations cite their projects as community development without making clear what the project entails. It is likely that community development and teaching top the list because of the limited investment in social services and weaknesses in the educational systems of the countries listed and the ease with which many volunteers can fit into such a role. Increasing demand on such services is due to issues such as high population growth, conflict and resulting refugees, pandemics, and a shortage of qualified individuals for such work. Many organizations offer teaching qualifications (via TEFL tests)to volunteers before departure, giving them a qualification which may be useful on their return home.

The third category, environmental projects, includes activities such as nature conservation activities like habitat protection and enhancement, and wildlife conservation. Those projects in the medical area include work in hospitals and clinics, not only actually assisting with medical treatment but also helping with post medical care and assistance programmes. What are defined as cultural projects deal mostly with strengthening and maintaining cultural aspects of societies, such as preservation of artistic forms and traditional celebrations and events, and can also include empowerment projects aimed specifically at women, with Afghanistan being a good example. This category also includes work on preserving and protecting heritage, particularly at archaeological sites and museums.

Business development and building projects are related, the former focusing mostly on assisting communities to develop support systems such as websites and training in marketing and accounting, and the latter category including more physical work involved with the construction

and maintenance of features needed by communities, such as for water supply for human use and irrigation. Those volunteers on research projects generally are involved with scientific groups and provide assistance with tasks such as monitoring and measuring wildlife populations, indications of climate change, and in some cases, economic research.

The final category includes responses to disasters and sudden events, but there are few of these, partly because some projects will fall into the previous categories, and also because such relief and support is needed at extremely short notice, and volunteer organisations are unlikely to be able to assist in the necessary timescale.

The nature of the projects and their locations raise some potential issues. While India, a country with a low Human Development Score and a very large population has 186 projects, most of these in Community Welfare and Teaching ((68 and 46 respectively), Costa Rica, with a lower score and a much smaller population has 135 projects, but with Environmental being the most popular category (55 projects). Ecuador has only one less project, again with Environmental being the most popular category (47 projects). It is perhaps legitimate to consider whether such a distribution is even remotely related to need or reflects, in the cases of Costa Rica and Ecuador, their reputations as ecotourism destinations. Many young people, who make up the majority of volunteer tourists, are "green" in outlook and likely to find ecotourism destinations both highly attractive and in tune with their attitudes towards the environment. There is also the question of whether the pattern of distribution (demand) is being shaped by the volunteer organisations (the supply side of volunteer tourism) and if so, is it because such organisations find it easier and more rewarding to send volunteers to established ecotourism destinations in third world

countries? This would suggest that volunteer tourism is moving from a predominant focus on assistance to communities in need to one serving both the altruistic and the hedonistic feelings of the potential volunteers. If this is the case then volunteer tourism is following the pattern of ecotourism in becoming "softer" and more pleasure focused than in its original form (Weaver 2001)

Volunteer Tourism Organizations

The projects reviewed above were listed from 146 volunteer tourism organisations. The sheer number of such organisations reflects the great increase in popularity of volunteer tourism from its initial endeavours in the 1920s, when participation was highly individual, small in scale, and marked by an absence of promotion or marketing, or indeed, almost any assistance to potential volunteers. The change in scale is likely to have been mirrored by a change in motivation of those involved in providing opportunities for volunteers, and this is examined in the following section. The organisations reviewed range widely with respect to mission, nature of structure, size and experience in the field. It was decided to examine the characteristics of the leading forty organisations in terms of growth in recent years.

Foundations and Mission

The importance of key individuals in the establishment of these organisations is revealed by the fact that just over half (26/40) were founded by individuals, as shown in Table 2. Beginning with Pierre Ceresole, who, as noted above, founded Service Civil International (SCI) in 1920, the pattern revealed is one dominated by western nation personalities. A considerable gap in time occurs after the first two

organisations appeared, it is over three decades before another volunteer organisation is founded, (the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers) in 1959. Thereafter organisations began to appear at a more rapid rate. The decade of the 1980s saw a rapid increase in numbers of organisations established (13), and the 1990s saw even more (32) founded. In the last decade almost a third (46) of the 146 organisations were founded, reflecting the ongoing interest and involvement in this area.

Table 2: Organisations and Founders

ORGANISATION	YEAR	FOUNDERS
Service Civil International	1920	Pierre Ceresole
Voluntary Service Overseas	1958	Alec and Mora Dickson
Operation Crossroads Africa	1958	Dr James Robinson
BTCV	1959	Brigadier Armstrong
Amigos de las Americas	1965	Guy Bevil
Earthwatch	1971	Max Nicholson
Volunteers for Peace	1982	Peter Coldwell
Global Volunteers	1984	Michel Gran and Bud Philbrook
World Teach	1986	Michael Kremer
Volunteer Adventures	1987	Jean-Marc Alberola
Projects Abroad	1992	Dr Peter Slowe
Greenforce	1992	Marcus Watts
Cross-Cultural Solutions	1997	Steve Rosenthal
Global Vision International	1998	Steve Gwenin
United Planet	1998	Charles F. Clarke
Helping Hand USA	1999	Mel W. Slavick and Frank Cook

Global Volunteers Network	2000	Colin Salisbury
Cosmic Volunteers	2000	Scott Burke
Right to Play	2001	Johan Olar Koss
Mondochallenge	2001	Anthony Lunch
i-to-i	2003	Deidre Bounds
Global Aware	2003	Haley Coleman
Global Youth Opportunity	2005	Michelle L. Anderson

These organisations vary greatly in terms of the number of countries they are working in, with the larger ones being active in around one hundred countries (Figure 2), while the largest group (46) work only in one country and another 40 organisations are present in between 11 and 20 countries. This variation may reflect small locally focused organisations being involved in their own country only, while the more international groups have contacts and projects around the world. Data do not exist to allow a comparison to be made between the number of countries in which organisations operate and the number of countries from which they draw volunteers.

There is also considerable variation among the organisations in terms of their financial position, whether, for instance, they claim charitable or non-profit status or exist as commercial operations. The declared status of organisations is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Declared Status

Status	Number of Organisations
Not for Profit	17
Operated by or working for non profit	6
Ethical NGO	6
Not Stated	6
Special Tour Operator	3
Charity	2

The actual status of a number of these organisations is not clear, only two claiming charitable status, which has many financial advantages as well as a very positive image. A number (6) declared themselves as "ethical NGOs", whatever that may mean, while six did not define a status. It is clear from the above that there is great inconsistency in the way that volunteer organisations describe themselves and a lack of clarity over their financial arrangements and status. In a volunteer environment, charitable and non-profit making status are noticeable strengths and attributes for an organisation to possess and make them more likely to attract volunteers than regular commercial profit-making enterprises. Most volunteers would appear to want any financial gains to accrue to the communities in which they are working rather than commercial organisations in First World countries. Despite the inconsistencies noted, it is significant that all companies stated that their pricing policies and businesses are operated on ethical grounds, an important fact given that prices and costs of volunteer holidays have raised concern amongst the media (Times 2008).

In terms of pricing, the proliferation and variety is again apparent with different organizations adopting different pricing strategies (Table 4).

Starting with the cheapest projects, only one of the forty organizations examined offered volunteer projects for the price of a one-off application/membership fee. This fee was around $500 US and it provided the opportunity to customers to choose another project without charge, as long as they wished to travel within the same year. There was also one organization that offered volunteer opportunities in return for a $1,500 US deposit, which participants could collect after completing their volunteer efforts.

Table 4: Pricing Policy

Pricing Policy	**Number of Organisations**
Fixed Price	25
Not Clear (Call back service)	10
No prices	3
Single Application Fee	1
Deposit	1

Three organizations refrained from disclosing any details about their volunteer opportunities. Instead they offered guidebooks for sale at prices ranging from $ 30 to $ 75. The vast majority of organizations, 25 out of 40, provided volunteer opportunities at a fixed rate with an all inclusive packaged deal format. The fee in general included project fee, volunteer coordination, accommodation, and administration expenses. These fees range from $ 300 US to $ 1,000 US per week depending on destination, project and of course the type of accommodation. Most do not include the cost of travelling to the location of the project.

Adding to the price of volunteer participation are certain extras which participants can purchase at their own discretion (see Table 5). These extras vary from short excursions and city tours to safari experiences. A recent development in the field is the option of obtaining academic credit, from mainly US academic institutions. The cost of such an optional extra varies from organization to organization and university to university. There were 10 organizations that would not disclose any details of this option on their website. Instead they offer a call-back service, perhaps in an attempt to utilize direct contact in recruiting new volunteers. It becomes apparent that ambiguity, uncertainty and proliferation exist in the pricing and packaging of most volunteer organizations. This may have certain implications in terms of the impact and contribution of the organizations to the destinations utilised.

Table 5: Extras on Offer

Extra Options	**Number of Organisations**
Extra Supplements	20
Not Stated (Call back service)	10
Academic Credit	8
No Extras	2

Long Term Viability and Value

The great range of charges, financial status, scale of operation and training required of volunteers raises questions about the benefits to communities from volunteer projects. There is no doubt that there are extremely valuable organisations that contribute a great deal, but equally

there are other organisations that may be putting profit ahead of community benefit and be more concerned with providing volunteers with a holiday than with actually improving conditions in destinations communities. Those organisations that appear to have a clear mission and philosophy to international volunteering can, to some extent, be identified from their mission statements, their stated philosophies, and their requirements from and commitments to the volunteers they recruit. One such mission statement from Frontier Org.is a good example:

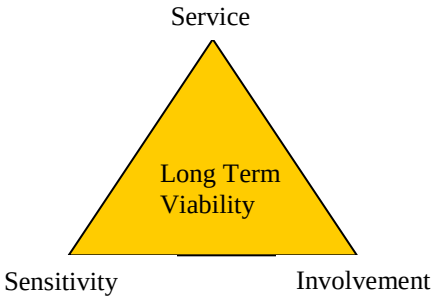
"Our conservation projects are established with the central aim of empowering local communities to manage their livelihoods sustainably, improving the overall quality of their lives and preventing over-use of their natural resources" (Frontier.org)

Statements from the International Volunteer Program Association (IVPA.org) make it clear that organisations should provide clear instructions to potential volunteers about what their role would be and what demands would be placed upon them. It is expected that organisations would offer a clear picture of their structure and what services are offered to volunteers such as instruction and preparation. The Association prescribes organisations to operate following four basic elements; these are sensitivity, service, involvement and long term viability (figure 3). This is in order to provide a satisfactory and safe experience to volunteers and to ensure the benefits of projects are maximised. In terms of sensitivity, this element is to ensure volunteers are culturally sensitive when in the field and can learn from their experience. Service ensures that volunteers are committed to provide appropriate and good service while working on their project. Involvement and long term viability are to maintain contact with volunteers on their return and to obtain feedback on their experiences and to enable projects to have long

term benefits to the communities involved, even after completion of specific tasks.

Such commitment to their project and their impact is underlined by the fact that these conservation efforts are part of longer term programmes which may last up to five years. This commitment to projects does not seem to affect prices, since Frontier.org are able to offer projects for the relatively low value of $ 125 US per week (excluding flights).

Figure 1: Elements of Good Price



In order to ensure that volunteers have sufficient knowledge and sensitivity, it could be expected that most organisations would offer some level of training before putting volunteers in the field, however, as Table 6 shows, only 16 out of the 40 top organisations clearly offered training to volunteers. Such training might include teaching qualifications, PADI diving qualifications, and language training when locations are in non-English speaking countries, as are the majority of cases. The lack of clarity by the majority of organisations is disconcerting, some only offering pre-departure "briefing" after registration or open-day events,

although the latter could be seen as more for recruitment than training purposes. The necessity of training will clearly vary with individual projects, in some cases it may not be necessary, on other cases, non-provision might be a means of reducing costs for the organisation.

Table 6: Volunteer Training

Training	**Number of Organisations**
Some sort of Training	16
Not Clear	24

Not all applicants are necessarily suitable as volunteers and there is some obligation on the organisations to ensure that people are appropriate to work on the various projects. Organisations would find it difficult to object on many grounds to potential participants and most welcome the majority of applicants if they are considered fit and able to do the necessary work. Letters from physicians may be required if the work is highly physical, and age limits of 18-90 years seems general practice. Those under 18 normally require parental consent, but this is changing as more opportunities are being made available for family groups to participate. There is considerable variation in the detail of screening of potential volunteers undertaken by organisations which raises some possible problems. For example only a quarter (28%) of organisations surveyed makes background checks with respect to personal data, or more critical aspects such as police or criminal records.

In terms of gender, both male and female volunteers are welcome within generally mixed sex groups of volunteers. Members of the gay and lesbian communities appear to be welcome also, but organisations caution that in some destinations volunteers may need to keep a low profile. Looking at statistics provided by Peace Corps the profile of their

volunteer participants shows 3/5 of their volunteers are female and 2/5 male. The average age of their participants is 27 years and the median is 25 years but 5 per cent of participants are over 50 years old with the oldest being 80 years of age. The vast majority of volunteers (93 percent) are single and only 7 percent are married. In terms of education, 95 percent of Peace Corps volunteers have at least an undergraduate degree, which suggests that their market is well educated people.

Financial Contribution Policy

There is a certain hesitation about providing direct monetary support to communities or projects which might stem from the perceived discomfort related to former colonial stereotypes. Volunteer tourism organizations profess a non-handout-policy because, as they describe on their websites, they aim to create self-sufficient and sustainable projects in communities in need. On their website for example i-to-i stipulate that they avoid monetary handouts so that the projects:

"…do not become reliant on drip-fed financial aid for their continual existence" (i-to-i.com)

They argue that direct financial contributions can have a destabilising effect on the development and spirit of communities. They continue with their argument that in case their involvement ceases ("… the reasons can vary from an act of God, war, to a destination becoming less popular" (i-to-i.com)) then a once relied on source of income is instantly removed and some of the projects would collapse.

Local Involvement

Another way the organizations can contribute indirectly to local communities is by providing employment for locals. This can empower the employees and create the right conditions for long term viability. As shown in Table 7, different organizations have different policies in terms of employment of locals. Over half (23) of the organizations made no explicit claims or statements on their website that they make sure they utilize local staff, while 9 organizations, even though they imply using staff on location they do not give any detailed information in terms of numbers or the nature of their employment.

Table 7: Employment of Locals

Employment	**Number of Organisations**
No Claims of Employment of Locals	23
Implicit Employment of Locals	9
Clear Employment of Locals	8

Conclusion

It is impossible to overlook the role that individual initiative and business acumen has played in the development of structures and contemporary forms in volunteer tourism. Its transformation into a commercial business was probably inevitable due to the potential market appeal of volunteer tourism products. It could be argued that the mass-tourism model of packaging and segmentation now used in volunteer tourism was adopted because of its evident commercial success and popularity. Volunteer

tourism has now been segmented and packaged into its contemporary form (see Ellis, 2003). Through purposefully designed websites volunteer organisations ensure that volunteers are portrayed as the archetype of a new kind of tourists who have compassion and empathy for the plight of the disadvantaged, the neglected, the endangered and the needy, irrespective of species, situation or destination, an approach that has proven very successful.

As discussed earlier, a significant segment of the volunteer organization sector labels itself as non-profit. Yet the market is becoming more and more prolific with many organizations diversifying and offering various extras as part of the volunteering experience. Recently, there have been media calls for the volunteer organizations to stop charging large amounts of money for their services using the argument that where there is a need, volunteering and assisting should be free of charge. Volunteer Organizations now find themselves facing a dilemma as to which should be the way forward. The organizations can be viewed as being on a continuum in terms of their priorities between profit and altruism, with some being closer to one end in terms of their practices and others closer to the other. It can be argued that a similar continuum applies to the volunteer participants themselves. Volunteers have to balance their participation between altruistic sacrifice and hedonistic pursuits when selecting and participating in a volunteer project.

In conclusion, it is not possible at this point to determine the nature of the balance between supply and demand for volunteer tourism, and which sector is leading which. There has clearly been massive growth in the activity, but it cannot be stated whether this is due primarily to a genuine growth in numbers of people with altruistic or empathetic motives wishing to devote their holidays to worthy causes or due to effective and

intensive marketing of volunteer holiday opportunities which allow well-meaning individuals to combine assistance to others with enjoyment and self-enhancement. The pattern has changed very greatly from the 1920s when volunteer tourism was essentially personally motivated and organised and more a case of doing-good in one's leisure time, to the 2000s when opportunities exist to have a holiday in a pleasant location and feel one is contributing to good causes. The balance has clearly shifted away from empathy towards hedonism and from altruism to profit. Whether the growth of volunteer tourism will continue, and the balance will swing back and if so, when remains to be seen.

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Dr Konstantinos Tomazos
Department of Management,
University of Strathclyde Business School
199 Cathedral Street
Glasgow, G4 0QU,
United Kingdom
E-mail k.tomazos@strath.ac.uk

Professor Richard Butler
Department of Management,
University of Strathclyde Business School
199 Cathedral Street
Glasgow, G4 0QU,
United Kingdom
E-mail richard.butler@strath.ac.uk